Scott, H. E.
Pam - Africa - Central

A

LETTER

FROM

DOMASI MISSION

BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

TO THE

SABBATH-SCHOOL CHILDREN

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

1902.

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by Dr. Scott, H.E.

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CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

THE

CHILDREN'S LETTER

FROM

DOMASI MISSION

BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.

Domasi Mission, Zomba,
British Central Africa.
1st September 1902.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

Often do we missionaries wish we could possess ourselves of wings and fly over the seas to Scotland to see what our friends at home are busy with. And I daresay it sometimes occurs to some of you that you would like some day to look in at Domasi and see what your friends are doing there. Were you really to come you would find that there were more missionaries at Domasi than ever you realised. Let me tell you who they are and what they do.

There is Miss Christie who, in addition to her evangelistic work in the villages, has charge of the girls on the station; while Miss Macvicar superintends the laundry work of the bigger girls and looks

after the sewing classes.

Then as regards the boys, Mrs. Scott has charge of the arrangements of the twelve dormitories and has to see that the boys both big and small have a mat to sleep on and a blanket to cover them during the cold nights, and that they keep their rooms tidy. Mrs. Thom has no light task in keeping eighty six of the younger boys clad in clean and not too ragged garments; while Miss Ludgate has courage to face the problem of providing twice a day such a meal as will satisfy over one hundred hungry mouths. The school work, both in the station and in the villages, is in the hands of Mr. Thom, while this year we have with us Mr. Armitage, who, besides looking after the carpentry here, is helping with the building of the Livingstone Memorial Hospital and Manse at Zomba. The minister's work and the doctor's fall to myself. Thus there are eight of us all together and the work is still not all taken up!

But if you cannot come to see us, the next best thing you can do is to write to us. Our boys and girls were greatly pleased to receive so many letters in answer to the ones they wrote last year. Some there are, however, who have not received answers to their two last letters and they say they are going to write only one more. So, my little friends, take warning!

We have more boys and girls staying at Domasi at present than ever we have had before. The fact is that they are all becoming very anxious to learn. Not very long ago we had to give the children pieces of cloth to wear before they would attend school. Now, not only no cloth is given but in all the village schools the children have to buy their school books. And, accordingly, a most common sight at Domasi nowadays is to see a school boy carrying a basket of corn or a fowl by its legs with which he wishes to buy the necessary book before he can rise to a higher class.

DOMASI SCHOOL.

There are about 140 children attending the station school. Go into the school any forenoon and you will find them all busy with their lessons. They are divided into ten classes and are taught by young native teachers. About two thirds of them have begun to learn English; the senior class having reached as far as the fifth Royal Reader. You will sympathise with the boys here when they say they do not like the spelling of English words. They cannot understand why the same sounds are spelt in so many different ways; and I daresay the same thing has often sorely troubled you. The spelling of Yao words is so easy that all the boys and girls can learn to spell correctly in a few months. Every letter has only one sound and every syllable ends in a vowel. The vowels are *a*, as in father; *e* like the a in fate; *i* is pronounced as e in me; *o* as o in over; and *u* as u in flute. Now you can read a line of the Yao Hymn "There is a happy land."

Nale chilambo 'cho
Chitaliche
Nale tu wandu 'wo
Wasalele
Aga akwimba 'ga
Wambone Ambuje 'wa
Tukumlapila 'ga
Tujimbeje.

And if you were to hear it distinctly read by a boy here, even though you did not understand the meaning of the words, you could write it down without making mistakes in spelling. How splendid it would be if you could write down your dictation in school without having to remember peculiar spellings and without guessing!

In beginning arithmetic the boys straightway learn to use English numbers. The native way of counting is too slow and cumbersome. They have numbers only up to five, and then they count five

and one, five and two, and so on up to ten for which they have a word *likumi*. While they thus count they also use their fingers in a peculiar way. Starting with a closed hand they stretch out their fingers, beginning with the little finger to represent one, till the thumb is reached. When five is reached the fist is closed over the thumb. Seven is counted by holding two out-stretched fingers of the right hand inside the closed fist of the left hand. When ten is reached the two hands are clapped together. To clap the hands twice means two tens and so on. Now when a man brings seventeen eggs for sale how does he count them? He claps his two hands together, then closes his left hand over the small and fourth fingers of his right hand, saying at the same time, "I have brought eggs ten and five and two for sale." But this mode of counting would not do for arithmetic, and accordingly the scholars learn the English numbers at once.

Baptismal classes.

The most remarkable progress made during the past year has been in connection with the baptismal classes. About forty young men and women have been baptised either at Domasi or at Zomba within the past twelve months; but what is still more gratifying is the fact that so many others have come forward to join the baptism classes. At Domasi there are about a hundred members in the ministers classes, while the elders have many more attending their preparatory classes. At Zomba Church there are twenty two young men in the ministers class and in the elders' classes there are about thirty men and women.

Livingstone memorial hospital, Zomba.

We have long regretted that, owing to their being no missionary resident at Zomba, we have been able to undertake so little mission work amongst the

young folks there. A Church service and classes on the Sunday afternoon, and, latterly, Miss Christie's sewing class on the Wednesdays were all we could overtake. We are now, however, greatly cheered by the prospect of a Native Hospital being soon opened not far from the Zomba Church. It is to be called the Livingstone Memorial Hospital, and is a gift from Mrs A. L. Bruce in memory of her father and mother, Dr. and Mrs Livingstone. The Hospital is to be furnished by the generosity of Captain Livingstone Bruce. Already the building has been begun and the builders are busy at present raising the walls. Dr. Laws of Livingstonia has kindly agreed to send an inscription stone from his quarries on Lake Nyasa with the words "Livingstone Memorial Hospital, 1902." Close beside the Hospital is to be built a house for the Womens Association, to be called the "Bruce Memorial." This also is the gift of Mrs A. L. Bruce in memory of her husband, and Miss Bruce has very kindly offered to furnish it. We hope it will soon be occupied by a lady missionary and by a nurse for the Hospital. Then not far from that there now stands, fast approaching completion, the Manse. So you see we have good grounds for hoping that we shall soon be able to do much more for the young native christians and others at Zomba than at present is possible.

Need of dispensary and church halls.

What we still need is a Dispensary and Church Halls. The Dispensary is where those not admitted to the Hospital are attended to. It will consist of two rooms and a verandah, and it is in the open verandah that most of the dispensary work is usually done. There they receive their medicine, and there the native assistants bind up the peoples wounds. The Church Halls are needed because at present we have no proper meeting place for classes and other such gatherings. The Church is the

only place; but it is not fitting that such meetings as sewing classes should be held in the Church. When mission work is begun properly at Zomba one of the first needs will be these Halls. Now, how have we to get them? The ladies here have done well in raising, through a Sale of Work, as much money as will, along with private subscriptions, build a suitable Dispensary. But the equipment of the Dispensary and the Church Halls are still to be provided for. We are not going to ask the ladies here to undertake another Sale, but we ask you our friends at home to help us as best you can. We shall probably build the Halls on the plot of ground between the Hospital and the Manse.

Self-extension.

For many years the native Christians have taken an active part in preaching of the gospel in the villages. At present about thirty are engaged every Sunday afternoon in visiting the villages for this purpose. But during the past year definte steps have been take towards self-support. The native Elders at Domasi have built two schools on Mchisi Island on Lake Shirwa, support the two teachers, and bear all expenses in connection with the schools. The Elders at Zomba have started a similar school of their own and are carrying it on on their own responsibility. Now that may be extremely little for so many Christians. They are not doing nearly as much as they ought; but they have made a beginning, and we trust their efforts will be increased year by year.

I remain,

Yours Sincerely,

Henry E. Scott.

Mr. Thom's Letter.

I have no doubt you children at home often wonder what sort of a life our boys and girls here live, and wonder why they come to school. You go to school because you are forced to. Your parents send you, and they know what is best for you. But how many of you would go to school of your own accord, and how many more would attend school every day for years if you could escape?

Yet here, all our boys and girls come of their own free will in fact their parents would prefer them not to go to school.

One great difference to be seen in school here is that classes are composed of all sizes and ages. A little boy and a grown-up man are often seen side by side puzzling through syllables or first mysteries of English. You may imagine that it is difficult for an old person to begin to learn; yet he is blessed with an amount of patience quite equal to overcome the early difficulties.

School begins at 8. 30, immediately after morning prayers which take place in the church at 8 o'clock. In the early morning, however, every one has his own allotted work to do. Then they require very careful looking after, for they are all so anxious to learn that they wish to spend the time over their books.

There is an interval at ten oclock, but no games are engaged in. As soon as they get outside the school door, they all run to a grass plot near, and there they squat in all positions learning spellings or the Multiplication table.

They have the same difficulties as you find at home. They have also their likes and dislikes for certain subjects. One thing they never tire of, and that is the Bible Lesson. It seems ever new and interesting to them, and they will sit on a Sunday afternoon singing hymns for hours. Singing they are also very fond of.

One pleasing feature in school this year is the

large number of village children in attendance. There are nearly 40 in attendance every day. Sometimes on a dull or rainy morning they will arrive a few minutes late, but a reasonable excuse can be made for that. In their houses they have no clock nor watch, their only means of judging the time is by the position of the sun; and it is marvellous how exact to time they can be. They do not say that school begins at 8. 30, but that school begins when the sun is at a certain height in the heavens, pointing with their hand. When therefore the sun is clouded over it is not to be wondered at that they should be late.

At work also they look to the sun for their time of stopping. Some will make a kind of sun-dial by driving a small stick into the ground. By marking where the shadow falls when they stop work one day, they know that, when the shadow is cast to the same point another day, the time for rest has come. So you see that they are ingenious in their own way, in fact they will manage to do many things, and think of ways of work that would not occur to you.

They have their games such as hand ball, but such as you play at school they have none of; in fact the only English game they are fond of is football.

You must wonder how they manage to kick the ball with their bare feet, and yet they very seldom get hurt. The difficulty is to keep them supplied with footballs, they go done too quickly.

Miss Christie's Letter.

I have been out to-day paying my weekly visit to some of the villages on Shirwa Plain, which we look down upon from Domasi, and perhaps you would like to have some idea of what a day's "Village visiting" means. I started in my machila at 9 o'clock and in about an hour reached Chemtwiche's, the

first village on my day's list, and alighted in the "Panganya," as the public meeting place in every village is called. Some boys were playing about and ran off to announce that the "Dona had come for sukulu." While waiting I went to call on an old lady, widow of the late headman. She wears a very large lip-ring and thick brass bracelets and anklets, and is a person of considerable importance. She has great faith in all the old customs and believes her husband died from witchcraft. She seemed to be entertaining friends to-day, for there were a number of women about her, all sitting on the ground outside her hut. The younger ones were shelling beans, another was busy with a fire and pots, and a little boy came running up with a fowl ready for cooking. After a little chat we all went to the Panganya where I found my audience had gathered, in all about thirty, including ten or twelve married women, while the rest were boys and girls. One man is always there. He cannot speak properly, and has never been able to walk, he can only creep on his hands and knees.

This little meeting seems to be a great event to him, and he does his best to call others to come. There was a block of wood brought under a shady tree for me to sit on. Others had found a picture in the machila and had pinned it on the trunk of a tree and were gathered round chattering and speculating over it. Then we all sat down and began our lessons. First a short prayer, next, a hymn. As it was a new one they repeated the verses carefully several times before trying to sing it. It is wonderful how quickly some can pick up a tune. After this, a very short Bible lesson, a picture to illustrate which is a great help. To-day it happens to be the story of Joseph sold by his brethren. The old women exclaimed indignantly at the deceit of dipping the coat in blood. Then I gave the boys and girls a question in our School Catechism and made them repeat it time about as I find a

little variety and emulation help to keep up the interest. To-day they were in the mood for singing, so we had another hymn, one they knew and could join in heartily, and then we closed with the Lord's Prayer. After this the grown up people dispersed and the younger ones remained for what they call their school which means that they have a card with the alphabet and a set of syllables which they are trying to learn, and they expect me to examine them on the week's progress. You can fancy they don't learn much. Still the attempt strengthens the links between us, and I hope we shall get Schools in this district by and bye. Several of the girls are specially keen and really do better than the boys.

My next village was about a mile away. I found the older people holding a beer drinking in memory of some one who died long ago and they were beating drums and singing at the grave near the village. One man was loudly reciting Mahommedan prayers at his hut door, several young men and boys who always come to my meeting, were sitting on a mat in the Panganya intent on trying to form letters on a piece of broken slate. One of them mounted an anthill and blew a horn, and the usual people soon gathered. Our lesson was much the same as at Chemtwiche's. There are more women and girls here. They were very backward for a while but I think they are beginning to take more interest now.

After leaving Machinjiri's I sat down beside a stream to take my lunch, and a lot of little children who followed from the village looked on, evidently thinking this the most interesting part of my visit. I went to Misikisi quite a small village. The old headman is very quaint, with a red handkerchief on his head and coils of brass on his arms. There are only about a dozen women and girls, and we sat in the verandah of one of the huts. It was very clean and the mud walls were adorned with

figures of men on bicycles, steamers, animals and caricatures of the dreaded silikali or native police—all painted on with ashes and water.

The mistress of the house is a little girl about twelve. Her young husband is working at Zomba helping to build our Hospital.

This was my last visit and an hour and a half by a very rough path, through bush and maize fields, brought me back to Domasi about sunset. Such is village visiting, cheering and pleasant when, as to-day, the people are responsive and seem to like to learn. But there are times when they all seem thinking of something else, the children in the humour for fun, the women taken up with private affairs or bits of village gossip, and then it needs all one's patience and power of contrivance to gain interest.

Will you think sometimes of the villages under the glorious African sunshine on Shirwa plain, and pray with us that the hearts of all the people may soon be gladdened by the still more radiant sunshine of the knowledge of the love of Christ, the Light of the World.

To Sabbath School Superintendents.

Dr. Scott will be pleased to answer any inquiries made to him regarding the boys and girls supported at Domasi Mission. When a scholar, for some reason or other, leaves the Mission, another is appointed in his place, and this change is notified in the subsequent annual letter.

All requests for the allocation of children should be made direct to

The Minister.
Domasi Mission, Zomba,
British Central Africa.

STATISTICS.

(August 1902.)

Domasi Church.	
Elders.	7
Communicants.	85
Catechumens.	95
Zomba Church.	
Elders.	8
Communicants.	78
Catechumens.	24
Educational.	
Schools.	17
Teachers.	28
Scholars in Domasi School.	162
,, Village Schools.	550
Artisan Apprentices.	
Printers.	8
Joiners.	14
Gardeners.	12
Boot repairers.	4
Laundry.	6
Boarders.	
Boys.	106
Girls.	18

LIST OF PATRONS

WITH NAMES OF BOYS AND GIRLS ALLOCATED.

The names of those boys and girls who are baptised are printed in capitals.

BOYS.

	Patron.	Name.
	Aberdeen	
1.	Holburn.	Martin Kwilaya.
2.	Rosemount.	William Sani.
3.	Addison, Miss, Kelso.	Govati.
4.	Alexandria.	Mkwajama.
5.	do	Akola.
6.	Amsterdam & Rotterdam, Scotch Churches.	Kundembe.
7.	Auldearn.	Manawila.
8.	Avoch.	Frederick Kasajo.
9.	Barry.	Chinyemba.
10.	Blackford.	Mindano.
11.	Bo'ness.	Naenda.
12.	Brydekirk.	Kundaje.
13.	Castleton.	Harrison Seremani.
14.	Ceres.	Liunga.
15.	Coldstream.	Manasseh
16.	Craigiebuckler.	Juma.
17.	Craignish.	Kandaya. (Zomba.)
18.	Deer.	Jenga.
19.	Dornock.	Subaili.
20.	Dunbar.	Mbiriwiri.
21.	Dunblane.	Charles S. Mkanda.
22.	Duncansburgh.	Pirijala.
23.	Dundas, Mrs, Edinburgh.	Mpunga.
24.	Eddlestone.	Kennard Jana.
	Edinburgh.	
25.	Grange Church.	Simon.

26.	Mayfield.	Jalasi.
27.	New Greyfriars.	JOHN PETE.
28.	St. Aidan's	LAWRENCE MMANGA.
29.	St Matthew's.	Kandaya. (Mbaru.)
30.	Tolbooth.	Gomani.
31.	Trinity College.	Ngoloweka.
32.	Two Friends.	Mkotima.
33.	Elie.	Tayali. (Liwonde.)
34.	Ellon.	THOMAS M. CHEONGA.
35.	Erskine.	Saidi.
36.	Fettercairn, The Burn S. S.	Sapali.
37.	Fossoway.	Silikali.
	Galashiels.	
38.	Parish S. S.	Chitemangu.
39.	Ladhope.	MURRAY MSOMA.
	Glasgow.	
40.	Springburn S. S.	Sumbuleta.
41.	Springburn W. G.	Mtengula.
42.	Oatlands.	Wasi.
43.	Titwood.	Madukani.
44.	Grange, Aberdeenshire.	Soka.
45.	Granton.	Cheuseni.
46.	Greenock, East Church.	Mitole.
47.	Guthrie.	LAWSON SIMBOTA.
	Hawick.	
48.	Parish S. S.	Mikundi.
49.	St. Margaret's.	Siriwindi.
50.	Wilton Bible Class.	JULIUS NDALAMA.
51.	Wilton S. S.	Amwai.
52.	Insch.	Lionde.
53.	Inverallan.	AUSTIN LUMWILA.
54.	Inverurie Bible Class.	Mulela.
55.	Johnstone.	Mbaira (W. Macloy.)
56.	Kippen.	Jota.
57.	Kirkpatrick-Fleming.	Gangata
58.	Kelso, North Church.	GREVILLE MALALANJE
59.	Largs.	Michaya.
60.	Leith, St. John's Mission School.	Katunga.
61.	Maclean, Mrs, Hamilton.	PEARSON LULANGA.

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62. Meldrum.	Tikawere.
63. Midcalder.	Mausya.
64. Milngavie.	Isa.
65. North Isles Presbytery.	Suya.
66. Newton, Dalkeith.	Misomali
67. Panbride,	Katema.
68. Paris, Scotch Church.	Lichanda.
69. Penninghame.	Chinganga.
70. Row.	Salasinja.
71. Robertson, Miss, Aberdn.	Chilimani.
72. St. Andrews, Fife.	Joya.
73. Savoch.	Garnet Samute.
Selkirk.	
74. Parish S. S.	Kalowana.
75. Heatherlie.	Wesley Kusindo.
76. Stevenson, Mrs.	Daniel Msuweta.
77. Stewart, A. W. Esqr.	Suwedi.
78. Somanje, Che.	Duncan Somanje.
79. Symington.	Majiri.
80. Torthorwold, Dumfries.	Chambo.
81. Tarland S. G. F. S.	Leonard Nonyela.
82. Tulliallan.	Mkwate.
83. Walkerburn.	Cheremu.
84. Wemyss.	Luti.
85. Williams A. Jay, Esq.	Katyale.

Unallocated Boys.

Makolija.	Chitonya.	Tayali. (Changwa.)
Mansowe.	Simosya.	Ndemanje.
Tayali. (Zomba.)	Njiranda.	Misika.
Mbwana.	Mwamadi.	Chaluko.
Suya.	Masinja.	Mlongola.
Mambo	Kasembe.	Kwitamanda.
Matemba.	Taibu.	Masauli.
Chimcwa.	Jali.	Kunyenje

GIRLS.

86. Bothkennar.	Chelajeje.

87. "Children's Mission Circle," Mrs. McMurtrie's.	Mtumaleni.
88. Duguid, Miss, Aberdeen.	Lucy Asausye.
89. Edinburgh.	
90. "E."	Jeannie Chesichile
91. Ministers' Daughters' College.	Kuluwasala (Annie)
92. St. John's	Kuliye.
93. St. Matthew's	Chendemiji.
94. Forres.	Emma Achiwila.
95. F. W. U. Aberdeen.	Cheumile (Emily.)
96. F. W. U. Forfarshire.	Makolo.
97. Greenock, Gaelic Church.	Singalilwe.
98. Beriot Work Party.	F. G. Chelayeje.
99. Mortlach.	Kwawanichisya.
100 Newton, Dalkeith.	Chepasonje.
101 Stevenson, Mrs, Gargunnock.	Chetuweniji.
102 Tough.	Chetuweje.
Arolla.	Chembilanje.
Alulaga	Kulugoya.
	Misumamba

Sabbath School Gifts.

We are frequently asked what kind of gifts are most suitable for Sabbath Schools to send. Whether they be intended for individual boys or girls, or for the Christmas treat (for which we always welcome gifts,) the following are useful; knives, scissors, pencils, writing paper, hymnbooks, bibles, picture books, foot-balls, etc, etc.

These may be most conveniently forwarded by means of Parcel Post, of which the rates are as follows :— Under 3 lbs for 2/-; under 7 lbs for 3/- under 11 lbs for 4/-.